

should we say that his teaching was similar to his words in the Sermon on the Mount and other sayings of his of this time. We do know, however, what was the effect on the people who heard him speak. "They were astonished at his teaching." The reason of their astonishment was, "he taught them as having authority, and not as the scribes." The scribes taught by telling what this or that great Rabbi had said this or that passage meant. They did not trust their own good sense and their own intelligence to decide what a scripture meant; they must always tell what some great Rabbi said it meant.

Jesus, on the other hand, repeated no man's teaching. He spoke the truth from God's word to men's consciences.

The conceit of human learning divorced from common sense and a passion for God's righteousness always leads to intellectual and moral slavery. Interpretation should be intelligent. No teacher can know too much about his lesson. But let him not depend on what other men say about it. Let him weigh their words and judge for himself whether their words make the scripture plain.

#### Jesus Taught With Authority

No wonder the people were astonished. Into that barren time no note of authority had come. Now Jesus taught by saying, "I say unto you, etc.," and what he said was an appeal not to some learned teacher, but to the human conscience, which in every man assented to the truth of his teaching. The scribes appealed to the intellect only, Jesus to the universal conscience of humanity. Teachers, stop not with the pupil's intellect; thru the intellect press the truth home to his conscience. The truth is not to tickle the mind only; it is to stir the soul to action and thus develop character. - We need more authoritative teaching and preaching.

And, as Jesus taught with authority a man in the synagog with an unclean spirit began to cry out. It was a demon which had taken possession of the man's soul and mind which did the talking. This demon using the man's voice cried out saying, "What have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God."

#### Why Jesus Refused His Testimony?

But Jesus said to him, "Be still. I do not want your testimony. Of course you know me. I am come to destroy you. But your testimony will only do me harm. Already my enemies accuse me of casting such as you out by being in league with your master, Beelzebub. Be still. Your testimony is the testimony of unbelief and hate." And upon Christ's command the spirit tore the man, cried with a loud voice and came out of the man. The effect on the people was similar to that of his teaching, "They were all amazed." This was a new thing. Jews were accustomed to see demons cast out by magical spells and incantations, but they had

never seen them cast out by the word of command in this way. Of course, the report of the sensation which Jesus had created flew rapidly into all the country around.

#### Healing of Simon's Mother-in-Law

From the synagog Jesus and the four disciples went to the home of Simon and Andrew. Here at home Simon's mother-in-law lay sick with a great fever. Remembering what Jesus had done for the demonized man, they "straightway" tell him of the condition of this woman. Jesus was never appealed to in vain in such a case. He went to her, took her by the hand raised her up and lo! she was well. Not only had the fever ceased, but she was strong enough to minister to them, i. e., to give them eatables and drink.

#### The Sick and Possessed Healed

In the evening when the setting of the sun had closed the Sabbath day and begun the first day of the week the people began to bring the sick and those possessed of demons to Jesus. If he had healed the man in the synagog and Simon's mother-in-law, why could he not and why would he not heal their loved ones who were sick and possessed? Our lesson says that, "All the city was gathered together at the door." These miracles had brought the opportunity to Jesus to work others of healing and salvation. No doubt scores were healed. We do not know why he healed them unless it was his great desire to do good. We do not know from this lesson whether they had faith, but the inference is certainly fair, that they had in his power to heal them. In many cases we know Jesus made healing the avenue to entrance to their souls and thus led them to salvation. The sick were healed, the devils were cast out without being allowed to speak, "because they knew him." There are a multitude of questions raised by this lesson: What is demon possession? How did Jesus heal the people? Has demon possession ceased? Has the power to cast them out in Christ's name ceased?

These are interesting questions which we cannot answer in these comments fully. We simply suggest a thought or two. In heathen countries cases of demon possession identical with those told about in the gospels are found and isolated cases even in civilized countries. (See "Demon Possession and Allied Themes,"—*Nevin*.) How Jesus performed his cures, we cannot say, but that he did can not be questioned. He promised that healing of the sick and casting out of devils in his name should be signs to follow the believers, Mk. 16: 17, 18. And he did not limit these signs to the believers of the Apostolic age. James gives directions about the healing of the sick, James 5: 13 16. We need more faith in Christ to day. We know he will heal sick souls, cast out demons to-day as then, and there are those who believe that that Christ who is "the same yesterday, to day and forever" can and will also yet heal the sick bodies of those who trust him.

#### Lesson Applied

1 The "straightway" life is Christ's kind. Do good while your conscience is tender. It shows Christ's eager energy. He went to the synagog "straightway," his preaching made the demon cry out "straightway," the report of his healing spread abroad "straightway," they came out of the synagog and went "straightway" into Simon's house, and they "straightway" tell Jesus of the sick woman in the house.

2 When men preach and teach so that the demonized cry out, the teacher and preacher can be trusted.

3 Teaching and preaching with the authority of truth is always at a premium with God. "Be sure you are right, then go ahead" full steam.

4 Demons change their way of possessing men with time, but they still need to be cast out.

5 Only Christ can cast out the demons of our times and peoples.

6 Sometimes the only entrance to a man's soul is thru the avenue of his physical needs.

7 The testimony of demonized people do not glorify Christ.

8 The helping hand is ever the hand of Christ, seen or unseen.

#### BENEFITS TO SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS FROM THEIR WORK

CORA MILLER

A Sunday school teacher may be benefited in various ways. First, in preparing his lesson he will, if he is a model teacher, search the Scripture and learn all he can about the lesson, and thereby gain a better knowledge of the Bible which is a great benefit. Paul says, how can they hear without a preacher, and how shall they preach unless they be sent, and I say how shall we teach unless we be prepared, and how shall we be prepared, unless we study? It is not only necessary that we become acquainted with the lesson, but we should also become acquainted with our scholars, study their needs and their wants which are many, that we may be able to supply them with such truths that will benefit both teacher and scholar. Second, by being present at every Sunday morning service. A Sunday school teacher that is interested in his work or the salvation of souls will not allow anything but sickness to keep him away from the Sunday school. When we become so disinterested that we think more of worldly amusements than we do of the welfare of our class, then I fear we will not be benefited much from our work. Neither will we receive the rich blessings which God has in store for us if we are faithful. We may say, I don't believe I will go today. I am tired, or I will go and visit a friend; my class will get along some way. So they will, but listen! Maybe next Sunday there will be one, two, or a half a dozen of your class missing. You will wonder what is the matter, but you have forgotten that you disappointed them the previous